IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface so as to controllably maintain a lengthwise space between adjacent turns of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface.

2. (Original) The bobbin case assembly according to claim 1 wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface.

3. (Original) The bobbin case assembly according to claim 2 wherein the tensioning element has an elongate body and the edge is defined by a bend in the elongate body.

4. (Original) The bobbin case assembly according to claim 2 wherein the edge is defined by a projection from the circumferential surface.

5. (Currently amended) [[The]] A bobbin case assembly ~~according to claim 2~~ comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the edge is defined by an undercut in the circumferential surface.

6. (Currently amended) [[The]] A bobbin case assembly ~~according to claim 2~~ comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has a body with a diameter, the body having a first diameter portion and a second diameter portion and the edge is defined at a juncture between the first diameter portion and the second diameter portion.

7. (Original) The bobbin case assembly according to claim 2 wherein the tensioning element has a body and the body has an angled portion at which the edge is defined.

8. (Currently amended) [[The]] A bobbin case assembly ~~according to claim 2~~ comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the edge is defined by texturing the circumferential surface.

9. (Currently amended) [[The]] A bobbin case assembly ~~according to claim 1~~ comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has a body, the circumferential surface is defined on a body portion having a length with a diameter, a first end and a second end, and the diameter of the body portion increases between the first end and the second end so that thread spirally wrapped against the circumferential surface is limited against lengthwise shifting between the first and second ends of the body portion.

10. (Currently amended) [[The]] A bobbin case assembly ~~according to claim 1~~ comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin for a supply of thread; and

a tensioning element for engaging thread projecting from a supply of thread on the bobbin,

the tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface against which thread can be wrapped so that a frictional resistance force can be generated between the thread and the circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has a plurality of edges to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of thread spirally wrapped against the circumferential surface.

11. (Currently amended) In combination:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface so as to controllably maintain a lengthwise space between adjacent turns of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply.

12. (Original) The combination according to claim 11 wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface.

13. (Original) The combination according to claim 12 wherein the tensioning element has an elongate body and the edge is defined by a bend in the elongate body.

14. (Original) The combination according to claim 12 wherein the edge is defined by a projection from the circumferential surface.

15. (Currently amended) [[The]] In combination ~~according to claim 12~~:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the edge is defined by an undercut in the circumferential surface.

16. (Currently amended) [[The]] In combination ~~according to claim 12~~:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has a body with a diameter, the body having a first diameter portion and a second diameter portion and the edge is defined at a juncture between the first diameter portion and the second diameter portion.

17. (Original) The combination according to claim 12 wherein the tensioning element has a body and the body has an angled portion at which the edge is defined.

18. (Currently amended) [[The]] In combination ~~according to claim 12~~:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the edge is defined by texturing the circumferential surface.

19. (Currently amended) [[The]] In combination ~~according to claim 11~~:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply,

wherein the circumferential surface is defined on a body portion having a length with a diameter, a first end and a second end, and the diameter of the body portion increases between the first end and the second end so that thread spirally wrapped against the circumferential surface is limited against lengthwise shifting between the first and second ends of the body portion.

20. (Original) The combination according to claim 11 further in combination with at least one component for stitching using thread drawn from the supply by the thread drawing assembly.

21. (Original) The combination according to claim 20 further in combination with a support to which the wall structure is mounted.

22. (Currently amended) [[The]] In combination ~~according to claim 12~~:

a) a bobbin case assembly comprising:

a wall structure mountable upon a support;

a bobbin;

a supply of thread wrapped on the bobbin; and

a tensioning element having a length and a circumferential surface,

the thread extending from the supply and wrapped against and at least partially around the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of the thread off of the supply,

the tensioning element having a configuration that limits lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface; and

b) a thread drawing assembly for exerting a tension on the thread to draw the thread from the supply,

wherein the tensioning element has an edge to which thread can abut to limit lengthwise shifting of a spirally wrapped portion of thread wrapped against the circumferential surface,

wherein the tensioning element has a plurality of edges to which the thread abuts to limit lengthwise shifting of thread spirally wrapped against the circumferential surface.

23. (Original) A method of drawing thread from a support [[of]] for the thread wrapped around a bobbin, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a tensioning element with a body having a portion with a length and a circumferential surface;

wrapping the thread against the circumferential surface so as to form a spiral portion of thread that is wrapped against the circumferential surface so that a frictional resistance force is generated between the thread and circumferential surface that resists drawing of thread off of the supply;

exerting a tensioning force on the thread to cause the thread to be drawn off of the bobbin; and

causing the spirally wrapped portion to be limited in lengthwise shifting relative to the portion of the body as the thread is drawn off of the bobbin so that a lengthwise space is controllably maintained between adjacent turns of the spirally wrapped portion of the thread.